

Dear Co-chair Kennedy, Co-chair Albis, and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee,

Re: Testimony for 3 bills: SUPPORT SB 361 (increases penalties for animal cruelty) with ADDITION of language to prevent use of gestation crates; OPPOSE HB 6034 (Sun hunting); SUPPORT HB 5707 (“Beagle Freedom” bill, outdoor sheltering for dogs)

Please accept this testimony in SUPPORT of SB 361 with the addition of language that would prevent gestation crates from being used in Connecticut.

I support increasing the penalties for malicious and intentional animal cruelty, and ask that you add language to SB 361 that would prevent gestation crates from coming to Connecticut. The intensive confinement of farm animals is already here in Connecticut – such as chickens confined in tiny cages at KofKoff Egg Farms in eastern CT -- and I don’t want to see further expansion of these types of cruel farming practices.

Because of the duration and severity of their confinement, pigs in gestation crates suffer more than almost any other animal used in industrial agribusiness. For several years, they are confined to crates that immobilize them, enduring a cycle of repeated impregnation. These individual cages are approximately 2 feet wide — so small the animals can’t even turn around or take more than a step forward or backward. Because they can’t move, they suffer crippling muscle and bone deterioration. And since these highly intelligent and social animals are denied any mental stimulation, many become neurotic, engaging in repetitive coping behaviors, such as constantly biting the bars in front of them.

The legislative proposal is simple: Amend the cruelty statutes (Title 53, Chapter 945) in order to “prohibit confinement of sows during gestation in a manner that prevents them from turning around freely, lying down, standing up, or fully extending their limbs.” Please use language as provided in the 2015 testimony from The Humane Society of the United States’ Connecticut State Director Annie Hornish.

I am among the 91% of Connecticut voters who want a ban on gestation crates, and I will be following this matter very closely.

Additionally, I OPPOSE Sunday hunting (HB 6034), because I want my one day of peace in the woods and because bow hunting is inhumane (high crippling rate), and I SUPPORT HB 5707, which would provide adoption opportunities for dogs and cats used in certain experiments and which would define outdoor sheltering standards for dogs.

Thank You for Voting with a Humanitarian Head and Heart!

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